

Christ's Compassion and Concern

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 November 2023

[0 : 00] Well, let's begin our worship by singing to God's praise. We're going to sing in Psalm 147, in the Sing Psalms version, Psalm 147. Sing Psalms version.

We're going to sing from verse 1 to 7. This is page 192. And it's a psalm that just reminds us about coming to the Lord with praise.

Praise the Lord, how good it is to sing him songs of praise. How pleasant to give thanks to him for all his gracious ways. We come with these words in mind to praise our God.

Singing from verse 1 to verse 7 on the Tunis Free Church. The Lord, how good it is to sing him for all his gracious ways.

The Lord builds up Jerusalem and the ages alone.

[1 : 33] To bring the exile's home.

He heals his people's broken hearts, He stores the news that way.

He sets the number of the stars and rolls very tiny.

the end of the house and rocks, The Lord sustains the defense, The Lord must live my in the The wicked to the God.

Sing to the Lord with handfulness, with joy in space proclaims.

[3 : 12] And when the music of the heart give glory to his name.

Let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Our gracious Lord, our Father in heaven, we bow in your presence at this time, just coming in adoration of you, coming in praise of you, with much to be thankful for.

We thank you for who you are, for how we have sung of your greatness in this psalm, how profound your wisdom is, as the psalmist says.

And we thank you that your wisdom is so much greater than ours. Your word reminds us that your ways are above our ways and your thoughts above our thoughts.

And so we are reminded by that, Lord, that whatever our ways and our own wisdom, that you are the one who is able to direct us and to help us to find our security and our help in you.

[4 : 30] And we thank you that as we come to you, we recognize just who you are, for your word describes it so wonderfully for us. There are so many passages of Scripture that we can turn to and we're reminded of your great power, your steadfast love, your great mercy towards your people, the way that you are a God who abhors all wickedness, Lord, the way that you are in knowledge of all things, that judgment belongs to you.

But we thank you that you have great power over your people, that you have authority in all things. For you are the Lord who builds up Jerusalem. You are the one alone who reaches out to Israel, as your word says, to bring the exiles home.

We thank you for these wonderful promises for your people. We thank you too that your word speaks of your great healing power, that you are the one who is able to heal the people's broken hearts, to restore the bruised and lame, so that in the midst of all the authority and power you have in creation, you have numbered the stars and called them by name.

But you have also seen your people. You have numbered them and you call them by name as well. And you know every need, every personal need, every wider need, every national and international need of your people far and wide.

And so we call upon your name tonight as the living God. We call upon you as the one, the only one who is able to help, the only one who is able to bless.

[6 : 15] And in all that we see as impossible for ourselves, we thank you that all things are possible with you. And so we come this night, Lord, praying for your church.

We pray that you will build your church up, that here in our own midst, in our town, in our community, in our presence here, Lord, that you will build us up as a people, that you will help us to be a living people, an active people, a people of much faith, of much prayer, of much service to you.

We thank you, Lord, that you have promised to build your church up, that the very foundation of it has been set, that Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, that he is the one upon whom all things are built. And we thank you, Lord, that that is such a wonderful reminder to us of the security of your church. For when the enemy attacks, as we so often see it, as we read it in your scripture too, we are given that wonderful promise that though the gates of hell prevail against your church, Lord, that it will stand secure.

And so we pray, Lord, that you will continue to bless your people near and far. As we think of the atrocities taking place in Israel and Gaza, as we think of the devastation, the loss of life, the ongoing conflict, Lord, we are just, have no words in it, Lord, but we cry out to you that you might have mercy, that you might come, O Lord, in your power, that you might turn a people to you, that peace would come, that we would see, O Lord, your hand in the midst of these terrible situations, that we would see, even if we don't understand it, that you would use it for good.

[8 : 21] We remember and continue to pray as well for other conflicts around the world, as we think of the Russian and Ukraine conflict as well and ongoing there, so we pray, too, Lord, for peace to come.

We recognize, too, Lord, that our world, in so many ways, has turned away from you, but yet we thank you that throughout the world there are signs of growth and encouragement, that especially where we see and hear of people being persecuted for their faith, suffering for it, that you are indeed giving us strength of faith, that we should long for ourselves, that we would see, O Lord, and pray for your church far and wide, that we would pray for ourselves, O Lord, to be built up with a strength of faith that will stand up to all the attacks that we come under, that we would stand up with courage and boldness and speak out against wrongs and seek your good throughout our land and for all people.

And for that, we pray for all our leaders, Lord, from our king and the royal family as a whole. Lord, we pray that you will give them wisdom to lead and to rule over a people, Lord.

We pray for them, Lord, to know your spirit working, to know what it is to truly believe in the Lord Jesus, to put their faith in him.

we ask, Lord, that you will do them good to that end. We pray for Prime Minister and First Minister and Parliaments in London and Edinburgh.

[10 : 04] We pray again for your blessing over them, O Lord, that you would guide them to yourself, that you will humble them under your mighty hand, that they would know your power, that they would know that all authority belongs to you.

O Lord, have mercy on us in these things. We pray too, Lord, for our people here and especially remembering those, Lord, with particular needs.

We pray for families going through times of bereavement just now. Again, we commit the family of Asda McKenzie to you, asking for your blessing on them, Lord, for you to comfort, to uphold and to strengthen.

Remember too, Lord, the MacLeod family, Reverend Duncan MacLeod and Morick and their other children and the wider family as they will come together on Tuesday for the funeral of Katie.

O Lord, in the midst of that great sorrow and pain that they feel, we just pray for your comfort, for your promises, even as we have sung of, that you are the one who is able to heal the people's broken hearts.

[11 : 18] O Lord, we pray for your great mercy and comfort to them all at this time and others too, Lord, who mourn. We pray to be near to them, be with all who are ill and in hospital and homes again, Lord, we pray for them.

Be with us all as a people, we pray that as we even read your word and turn to it this evening that you will remind us of what a wonderful Savior we have, what a wonderful sacrifice he has made for us, that he has come to seek and to save sinners.

We thank you, Lord, for the wonderful compassion shown by our Lord that even as he saw a crowd helpless and harassed like sheep without a shepherd, we thank you that his gaze upon them was one of loving compassion and concern.

And so we pray that you will fill our hearts with that same burden for all we see around us, that we would have a great compassion and concern for all people near and far.

So, Lord, may you bless your word to us. May you help us to have understanding of what you are saying to us. May you guide us through it. So, may you continue to bless us, Lord, and watch over us.

[12:40] Can we commit the youth fellowship that meets later to you as well, Lord, for your blessing there upon the young people who meet. We thank you for Jonathan and Alison as they host and for Hannah as she comes to speak and we just pray, Lord, that you will be in their midst as well.

So, Lord, continue with us now. Go before us in the week ahead. Guide our steps, guide our thoughts, guide our words and actions and all that we do, may it be, to your glory and forgive us our sins, O Lord, as we confess them on you, that you will cleanse us by the precious blood of Christ. For we thank you that in the cost that has been paid, that there is redemption for your people. We pray, Lord, to know that saving power.

So, bless us, we pray, and hear us as we ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. We'll again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 87 in the Singed Psalms, page 115 of the psalm books.

Psalm 87. And we can sing the whole of this psalm. Psalm 87, page 115. On Jerusalem's holy mountain, he has founded his abode.

[14:00] More than all of Jacob's dwelling, Sion's gates, are dear to God. We'll sing the whole of this psalm to God's praise. Psalm 87.

Glorious kings of you are spoken, Zion, city of the Lord, May be drawn from all the nations, As your people I record.

I will name us, Lord, to know me, Egypt, Tyre, and Balea, Palestine, along with Gershaw, I will count us high on war.

Yet, Saint, it will be said, O Zion, This and that will hear the old, And on her the highest blessing Will descend And make us strong.

For in Zion, God will enter, In the people's register, They will sing As saving, All my fountains Are in hell.

[16:23] We turn together to read God's word now in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 9.

Matthew, chapter 9. We're going to take up our reading at verse 9, reading down to the end of this chapter. Matthew, chapter 9, and taking up our reading at verse 9.

In the previous chapter, chapter 8, in the beginning of this chapter, if you just have a quick glance, you see Jesus healing and cleansing many people. We see that's a theme running through these chapters.

And what we're seeing is really Jesus' longing and desire towards a people, and we'll see that at the end of chapter 9, which we'll be focusing on together this evening.

And let's take up our reading at verse 9 of chapter 9. As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, Follow me.

[17:29] And he rose and followed him. And as Jesus reclined the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.

And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners? But when he heard it, he said, Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

Go and learn what this means. I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. And the disciples of John came to him, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?

And Jesus said to them, Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins.

[18:41] If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.

While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and she will live.

And Jesus rose and followed him with his disciples. Behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, for she said to herself, If I only touch his garment, I will be made well.

Jesus turned and seeing her, he said, Take heart, daughter. Your faith has made you well. And instantly, the woman was made well. And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute

players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, Go away, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went through all that district.

[20 : 00] But as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, Have mercy on us, son of David. When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this?

They said to him, Yes, Lord. Then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it done to you. And their eyes were opened.

And Jesus sternly warned them, See that no one knows about it. But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, Never was anything like this seen in Israel.

But the Pharisees said, He casts out demons by the prince of demons. And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and affliction.

[21 : 11] When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Amen. And may God bless that reading from his word.

Before we turn back to that passage, we'll again sing to God's praise in Psalm 103 in the Scottish Psalter version. Psalm 103, page 369.

And we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 5, the tune is Kilmarnock. Although my soul bless God the Lord and all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless.

We'll sing from verse 1 to 5 to God's praise. O Lord, my soul, best of the Lord, and all that in me is, He stood up his soul in him, to my life, and all that in me is, Bless, O my soul, the Lord, I know, and not forget for thee.

[23 : 11] Of all his gracious benefits, he hath which stood on thee.

All thy name, if we're thee to God, most graciously forgive.

O Lord, my soul, the Lord, my soul, and grace, hath thee and me weary.

O Lord, my soul, best of the Lord, and all that in me is, O Lord, my soul, best of the Lord, and all that in me is, Who with the wonders of good things, does satisfy thy mind, So that he can speak, O sing, bring you in his time in good.

can we turn back together to our reading in Matthew chapter 9 and we can read again at the end of the chapter verse 35 to 38 as you read through these verses we've read together from verse 9 you see Jesus it said that he's passing on he's moving on he's going from place to place with many different things happening and he's seeing many different people and then as kind of summarizing at the end of the chapter here in verse 35 we see that he continued to go through so many places Jesus went through all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction then these words when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd and he said to his disciples the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few therefore pray earnestly to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest

[26 : 24] Jesus as we say has seen many crowds of people in many different circumstances as he's been traveling around and it's this idea of a crowd as he sees him and what he sees in them that we want to think about this evening because it says here in verse 36 when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them compassion because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd so it was something that Jesus was seeing in his day and I'm sure something in many ways we see ourselves today too we see many different crowds around us but how do you react in crowds of people some people find crowds difficult find it kind of overwhelming and claustrophobic to be in a crowd others love to be in the midst of a crowd of people I suppose it might depend sometimes what kind of crowd of people you're with or you're in if we're gathered together here this evening or if we're in other places where we gather to worship

God with a large crowd of people it can be a real joy and a delight and uplifting to be among like-minded people lifting our voices and praise to God but other times you can end up in a crowd and it's not your own fault you end up in a crowd by mistake perhaps you're just walking along and all of a sudden you're in the midst of a crowd of people perhaps you are out marching or protesting about something and you end up just almost being swept along by this crowd and it can be a terrifying experience a very unnerving experience so a lot of times it depends what kind of crowd we're in and i'm sure many of us have been in different crowds in different places over the years whatever crowd you find yourself in wherever you are what's fascinating about crowds is just observing the variety of people that you find there whatever kind of crowd it is wherever it is however many people there are what you see is a people who are all made in the image of God the question very often is is that how we see them and we want to see this evening how jesus sees crowds how he sees people and the compassion that he has for them for as a great reminder to ourselves how we should look out ourselves and see the people around us a reminder of the compassion of the lord to his people and as you read through the gospel of matthew we are reminded even in this chapter we've read it in verse 13 why god sent his son into this world why jesus came into this world when you look at verse 13 of this chapter in the midst of jesus again with being with people sitting with tax collectors and sinners as the the pharisees would see them but jesus sees them differently he says in response to the complaints that he receives those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick in verse 13 go and learn what this means i desire mercy and not sacrifice for i came not to call the righteous but sinners that is why jesus came and up until this point in the gospel of matthew we learn so much about the authority of jesus who he is as the son of god and why he has come in the fulfillment of scripture she has come to save his people from their sins so we've learned you learn up to this point about the power the authority of jesus and then at the end of chapter 9 this section that we're looking at this evening we come to a kind of a point of transition where the focus shifts not just on jesus and all the work that he is doing and the authority and the power he has but what he wants his people to do and the power and authority that he is giving to them as they are being reminded of the people around them as they are to see them as we will see as the harvest feels the harvest is plentiful and as he goes on from here it's sending his disciples and sending his people out that they might proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of god and you see that as you go in to chapter 10 the 12 apostles then being sent out but before that we come to that and the end of chapter 9 we're seeing just why they were chosen and sent out

and why jesus continues to send his church out today we are being sent out and we are to be a people who have a compassion and a concern for those around us what do we see we see jesus here as he says here in verse 36 he had compassion for them and this compassion is then shown in the concern that there will be people laborers to go out into the fields to go out into the fields to bring in the harvest and as a people as a church that is the compassion and concern we should have ourselves as well as a church we should long and look around us to see the harvests brought in a people brought in to know the lord jesus that the lord would give us the heart of christ himself for that compassion for that compassion for the lost the christian writer jc ryle he said this once a person who does not feel for souls of all unconverted people surely does not have the mind of christ so what a challenge there is in these words as we think of them in the context of this passage the compassion and the concern that jesus showed towards the crowds and as jc ryle says if we don't have that feeling for souls of the unconverted people surely then we do not have the mind of christ we can become distracted even as a church as a body of god's people as a denomination as a church worldwide we can become so distracted by so many things that go on things that we think are so important for our own agendas and our own lives that we can so easily lose sight of what is at the heart of the gospel that jesus proclaims to us here it is a people who are lost and a people who are perishing that we would seek to have this compassion and concern that will be infectious to us that we would see the lord jesus and what he has done for us that he came for sinners and that he claimed as he claims sinners for himself that he would equip us as poor sinners as we were thinking this morning as fragile frail jars of clay but with a great treasure the gospel the glorious gospel so let's think about christ's compassion and christ's concern as we see it in this passage and see what it says to ourselves first of all we think of christ's compassion and we see it there so clearly in verse 36 when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd going astray lost no direction in their lives and he saw them and he had compassion on them so where does the compassion come from what is

the heart what's behind this compassion well it's the essence of who he is of who jesus is when we think of the word compassion we maybe think of just one word in english but there's a number of different words that are used for compassion in the greek and the one that's used here for compassion in the greek is only used of the lord it's almost like it's a unique word that only applies to the lord himself that only he can have this kind of perfect compassion because our compassion is never perfect because we are sinners but christ's compassion is perfect and when you read where this word is used and used of the lord it's always into circumstances of distress and despair and grief but the lord is there showing his wonderful compassion whether it's seeing crowds as we're seeing here or whether seeing families or individuals that jesus has a special compassion for his people unlike anything that we could show but when you think of who he is should we be surprised of course not we are imperfect but he is perfect how could jesus reach out to all the people he did how could he care about so many different people in so many different situations what motivated him motivated him well you have to go back to who he is as the gospel of john reveals to us this is god himself made flesh the word of god who dwells among us who is with us who god sent into this world jesus born into this world god with us god is behind it he sent his son in this world to this world because of his love for the world for the lost and so many people look at the old testament and they read it and come away from it with the idea that that that god is a cruel god a harsh god a god who is almost full of wrath and yet when you read in the new testament of jesus what we see is the exact nature of god who this is so it reminds us of god is a god of compassion yes he has wrath and judgment but also such great love we are reminded of who jesus is in the book of hebrews chapter one and it says long ago at many times and in many ways god spoke to our fathers by the prophets but in these last days he has spoken to us by his son whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom all he also he created the world and it says he is the radiance of the glory of god and the exact imprint of his nature god is holy he is a consuming fire he's a god of wrath and judgment but he's also a god of steadfast love grace and mercy and compassion so this is the essence of who jesus is and where his compassion comes comes from he is not hindered by a fallen sinful nature he is not selfish like we are he goes beyond all the flaw flaws and faults that mark us but that does not mean we should not long to be like him surely that is the desire of every christian to be more christian to be more christian to be more christian to be more christian to be more christian so what do we see here of christ jesus we see how he sees the crowd he sees his people he's looking on them intently and as he looks upon them he sees them with compassion compassion a longing that they would not be lost that they would not be without a shepherd but that they would know what it is to be brought into the fold

that they would know what it is to have the peace of jesus a quick glance over chapter 8 into chapter 9 it shows us the concern that jesus had jesus cleanses a leper he heals a centurion servant he heals peter's mother-in-law he calms a storm he delivers men from being demon possessed he heals a paralytic he raises a girl from her deathbed he heals two blind men and casts out a demon out of a man who was mute you read through it and you see all of these things why because of his compassion he sees a people in need jesus knows the pain his people suffer he knows every situation that they are in he knows what it is to be hurt deeply but he is also able to help in our hearts to enter into our hearts with us to be there with us he sees a people as only he can and so it asks us that question how do we look on people an american author he's no longer living by the name of stephen covey and he wrote a number of books and in one of his books he speaks about an unusual experience he had and it was a day when he was on the new new york subway and he was traveling on the subway and while he was sitting in one of the cars with a number of a large number of other people the place was fairly quiet until a man came on who had a couple of children with him the man just sat back in his seat and his children just started playing around making much noise and disturbing the place causing chaos and it was getting to the other passengers on the tram on the underground that they felt that children's behavior was inappropriate that the father should do something about it and eventually it got to the point where stephen covey felt that he had to go and speak to the man and so he did he went over to him and said look your children are being so disruptive can you not do something to settle them down at that point the man just who had been sitting with his eyes closed opened his eyes and started looking around oh he said i'm sorry you're right i should do something about it but then he went on to say this we've just come from the hospital where their mother just passed away an hour ago and i don't know what to think i don't know what to do and all of a sudden stephen's attitude of being annoyed by what was

going on was suddenly changed to a thought of compassion for this man stephen like so many others had just looked and judged without knowing what was going on in this man's experience experience now what's interesting is stephen covey didn't believe in jesus as we believe in him but yet he had compassion so how much more compassion should we have as the disciples of christ to look around ourselves and not look around with eyes of judgment thinking we know exactly what's going on and what needs to be done when perhaps behind it all we know nothing of the experience of individuals of families of strangers that we see around us compassion starts when we begin to understand the hurts of others and to know that we are one who is able to help

[43 : 54] but do we have that heart and these eyes of compassion for those around us in that way jesus saw the crowds and he had compassion on them on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd how do we view people how do we see those around us do we look through the eyes of jesus through eyes of compassion or do we look with eyes of judgment he saw the crowd and had compassion the second thing we see here is christ's concern perhaps we do have compassion perhaps we do have compassion towards not just those we know but those we see around us as well but we see with the compassion of jesus here it's not a compassion without action you see you see it as you read through the book of matthew up to this point he had compassion compassion but he was doing something about the needs of the people helping us only he could but also teaching his disciples that as they would be sent out that they would go with his power with his authority with his help and that he would teach them to have that compassion for all that they would come into contact with as well if we think of compassion in our own understanding compassion is often defined as a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering and a wish to help them we cannot maybe reach the compassion of jesus that only he could show in a perfect way but we should have a compassion that leads to a concern to help others seeing them as harassed and helpless and not just doing nothing but asking what can we do he's full of compassion here jesus but he's also got a plan and his plan is for his church his church to go out into the harvest fields and his church to pray for others from generation to generation to go out into the harvest field his plan is to send help to a needy people and so when you look at verse 37 and 38 it shows that his compassion leads into this concern he said to his disciples the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few therefore pray earnestly to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest jesus describes here the people the crowds that he is seeing as the harvest fields ripe with grain that are ready to be harvested but what he sees is the laborers are few but we see that he has a plan and his plan is founded on prayer he said to his disciples pray earnestly to the lord of the harvest to send out the laborers into his harvest when you read these words you think the prayers that his disciples had at this time are they still being answered today that they prayed not just for the harvest field as it was in these days but that for every generation and every nation of this world

that there would be laborers for the harvest for generations to come and that as we pray we enter into this ongoing prayer that the harvest would be brought in there to pray but there to pray earnestly with this heart and eye of compassion that they too would see the crowd and would see the need that there is that they would go as part of jesus's concern to show this compassion and concern to others themselves if you go and sit in any public place whether it's an airport or a coffee shop or the library or wherever you might go a place where people are passing by do you ever take time just to look at the people who are around the people who are dashing around perhaps if you're certainly if you're not so much storing away airport but if you go to a bigger airport glasgow or heathrow or somewhere like that you'll always see people dashing around rushing from one terminal to another or from one gate to another and everybody seems so harassed the same with trains and stations and places like that you see people who are just dashing around you ever stop just to wonder about these people and pray for these people with a sense of concern and compassion for them whether it's around us here or wherever we go that we have a sense of concern and compassion towards them and pray for them pray for the people who pass by you in the street here who pass by you in the coffee shops and other shops pray because they are part of the harvest field pray that they would come pray for laborers whether they be others or ourselves that as the lord gives us a burden that we would go because that is the prayer that jesus is telling them to have here pray earnestly to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest and there's a real sense of power behind that word send it's more than just just go out if you want there's a sense of power because this is his plan plan for his church for his people that they would

be sent out thrust out it has almost a violence behind it people are being forced out to go but it's not so much forced but behind this word is the idea of an explosion taking place that there's a real sense of power behind so they're sent out with the power of god behind them and with a real desire to go out with a compassion of their savior in their hearts a desire for many to be saved that is what is behind this and is that how we pray pray lord not just you do the work we pray that of course but lord help us to see men women boys and girls used in this way used by you because the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few

J.C. Ryle again to quote him him he reminds us that yes we are doing this in the power of god he says personal working for souls is good giving money is good but praying is best of all by prayer we reach him without money who money and work by prayer we reach him without whom money and work are in vain we obtain the aid of the holy ghost the holy spirit that we have that power with us that is often our prayer and that should always be our prayer prayer but behind it too is his willingness to go this willingness to go he says here we send out that he would send out laborers into his harvest and what happens next in chapter 10

Jesus sends out the 12 apostles they didn't sit back they went out and what happens at the end of the gospel of Matthew in the last chapter chapter 28 that chapter concludes with the great commission go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father the son and the holy spirit teaching them to observe all that i have commanded you and behold i am with you always to the end of the age we do nothing apart from him he has promised to be with us but we are to go they go in chapter 10 they go at the end and they continue to go to this very day seeking the power of god with us Jesus is concerned for his church he has compassion and he has a concern and his concern leads to a plan that he will send his people out so what hinders this compassion and this concern sometimes it's this complacency i don't know who said this but somebody once wrote this complacency is a blight that saps energy dulls attitudes and causes a drain on the brain the first symptom is satisfaction with things as they are the second is rejection of things as they might be good enough becomes today's watchword and tomorrow's standard complacency makes people fear the unknown mistrust the untried and abhor the new like water complacent people follow the easiest course downhill they draw false strength from looking back complacency complacency complacency kills complacency complacency brings everything to a shuddering halt we pray to the lord of the harvest as we pray we are to go not satisfied with what we have not saying that's good enough enough but remembering the compassion of christ and the concern of christ that is how we are to be to press on in our walk with the lord to not be satisfied with what we are or what we have but to always be looking to him for more more in ourselves more faith more courage more boldness more in terms of people being saved more in terms of laborers being sent out into the harvest field more glory to god is that our longing c.s lewis once wrote these words he said when he's talking here about kind of a complacency in the midst of a people he says it's it is hard but the sort of compromise we're hankering after is harder in fact it is impossible he says about staying as we are but he expresses it like this we are like eggs at present and we cannot go on indefinitely

just being an ordinary decent egg we must be hatched or else we go bad we're never to stand still we're never to stay as we are we are to press on being thrust out sent out not just forced out but longing to go out and to serve the lord to have his compassion and his concern to pray to him whether it be others or ourselves to go because the fields are white to harvest let us pray to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest that we would see many being drawn in for christ let us pray our father in heaven we thank you for the power of your word we thank you for the power of your spirit for the power you afford to your people that when we are a people of faith and courage and boldness that we have that great assurance that you are with us and so help us lord even as we see the crowds around ourselves how we see so many people day by day that we would see them through the eyes of our lord and savior jesus christ that we would have compassion and concern and concern for them for they are indeed so many like sheep without a shepherd lord may you send laborers out may you send them out from among ourselves and from many other parts of our nation and to all ends of the earth for the fields are white to harvest so we pray to the lord of the harvest to be with us in all of these things so we ask it in jesus name amen we'll conclude by singing to god's praise in psalm 145 the first version of the psalm psalm psalm 145 page 442 we'll sing from verse 8 down to verse 11 the tune is amazing grace and we see these words in verse 8 the lord is very gracious in him compassions flow in mercy he is very great and is to anger slow we're reminded there of the steadfast love and the compassion of our lord and that that would be

our prayer to these words as we sing them that as we go out in the week ahead we would go in this manner we'll sing from verse 8 to 11 to god's praise the lord is eto inter■avia and is to rife [60 : 22] CHOIR SINGING And over all his other words, his tender mercy shall.

Behold, thy words shall praise, O Lord, and in thy saints shall bless.

They shall thy kingdom's glory show, Thy power my speech express.

After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my right. We'll close with a benediction. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore. Amen.